

# JACK-A-BOY *IN* BEAST-LAND



ANNA·M·CLYDE





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“AS TIMID AS A RABBIT IN SPITE OF HIS GREAT SIZE”



*Jack-a-Boy*  
*in*  
*Beast-Land*

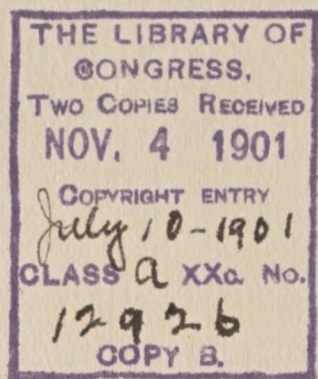
BY  
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AS TIMID AS A RABBIT IN SPITE OF HIS GREAT SIZE

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“COME, PRINCE, YOU MUST MAKE FRIENDS WITH MY  
RAGS” - - - - -

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# Jack-a-Boy in Beast-Land

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## CHAPTER I

### THE NEW FRIEND

"Now, Rags, remember, you are to be my little gentleman, and treat this pussy from far-off Asia as a gentleman should. Of course, Dearie, you are always my best friend, but we must love the new friend who is coming to us, too, and do all we can to make him happy. Do you hear me, my doggie, and what do you say?"

Rags' only answer was a long, loving look into Jack-a-boy's blue eyes, his own true brown ones saying as plainly as words, "My master, have I ever done other than you have wished?"



And now, who were Jack-a-boy and his little dog Rags?

Jack-a-boy was Mrs. Bird's little son, a darling lad of nine summers, with hair like spun gold, and tender blue eyes that looked straight into one's soul, and seemed to speak of climes yet happier than ours.

The sweet face was always pale, for bright, sunny-tempered little Jack-a-boy was a cripple. Once, long ago, he had been well and strong. But now, he could never more move from the little room in which he and his doggie talked in the twilight.

A peal at the door-bell!

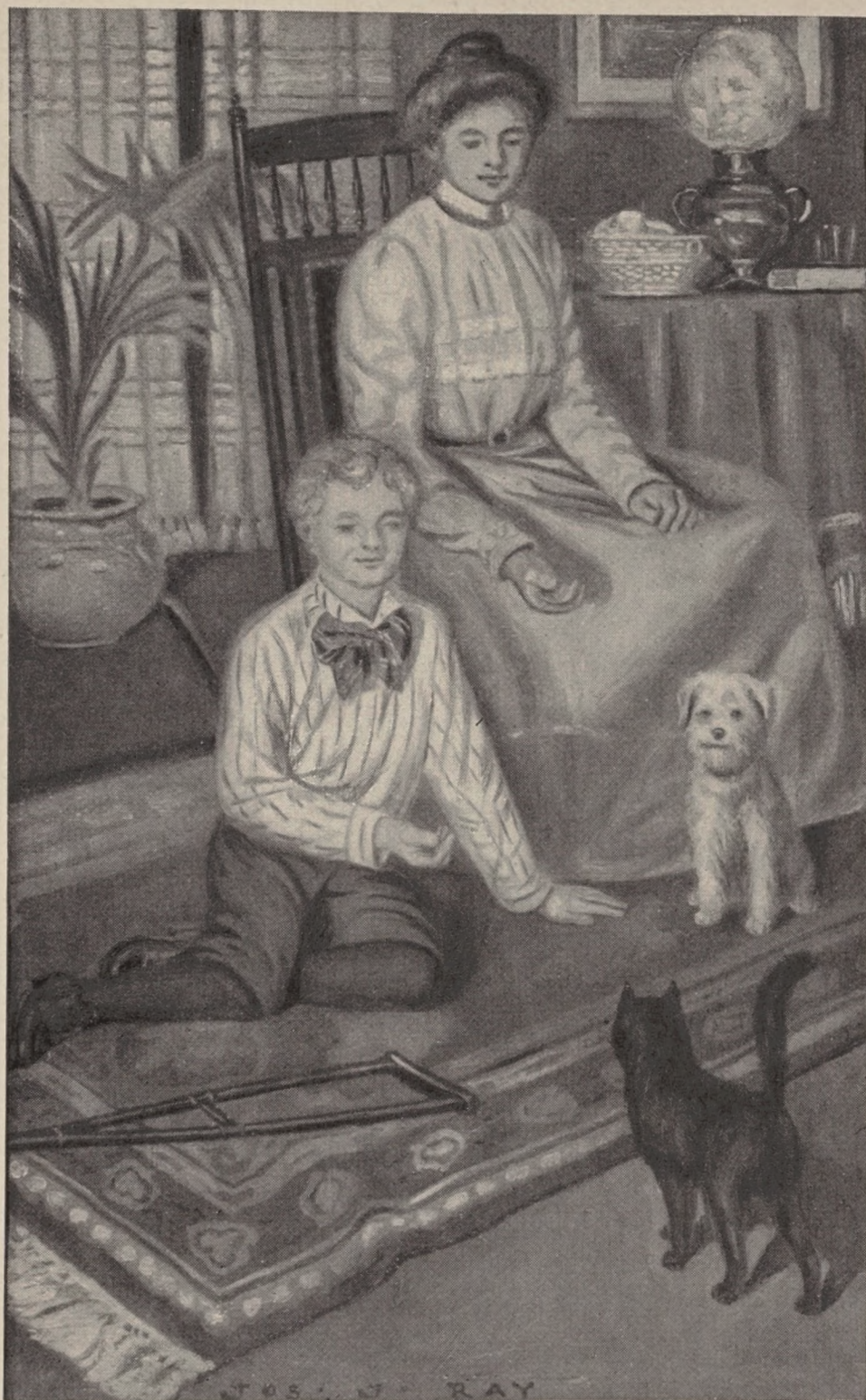
"It's pussy, Mother, I know it is.

"Oh, Mr. Expressman, have you brought him? Is he pretty? Do let me see him. Has he a pedigree?" tumbled from Jack-a-boy's lips.

"No, indeed, sonny, he has a basket," good-naturedly explained the expressman.

Jack-a-boy did not laugh. He was too truly polite, this boy of mine, but there was a merry





“COME, PRINCE, YOU MUST MAKE FRIENDS WITH MY RAGS”







twinkle in his eye as he replied, "And I am sure he enjoys that just as well."

In another instant, puss did not have even a basket, for out he jumped and purred up to Jack-a-boy's side, seeming to say, "Are you my little master? I am very glad to be your friend."

"Oh, what a dear sweet pussy! Mother, isn't he a beauty? What shall we call him?"

"Why, Jack-a-boy, he looks like the cat in the fairy tale book. You know, the prince, who looked the prince even when turned into a cat by his wicked fairy godmother."

"That's it, mother," cried Jack-a-boy, clapping his hands. "We'll call him Prince. My beautiful black Prince."

"Come, Prince, you must make friends with my Rags."

The wee dog stifled a jealous pang, but true to his gentlemanly instincts, sat up in his prettiest manner, and offered Prince a dainty white paw.



Prince bowed gracefully, as he accepted the outstretched paw of little Rags. They looked into each other's eyes a moment. What they saw I cannot say, but from that instant the two were the best of friends.

"Oh, Mother, aren't they the dearest things?" cried Jack-a-boy, his face aglow with pride and pleasure.

Truly, they were a beautiful pair of pets. Rags looked like nothing so much as a pure white snowball, his soft curls clinging to his little fat sides, his big brown eyes shining out soft and tender and loving from under the white fringe that almost hid them.

Prince was black as coal, with long hair and a beautiful feathery tail that seemed to be his pride. His eyes glowed like diamonds, and his tufted little ears gave him a look of great cat wisdom.

As the days passed, the trio had many long delightful talks. Often, in the twilight, Prince would tell tales of the far-off land from which he had come, or stories of the



forest friends he had known and loved so long ago.

"Ah, Prince," sighed Jack-a-boy, "if I only could see them. But that can never be. I must always stay here," quavered the pitiful little voice.

Rags cuddled close to the little form, and softly whispered, "You have us, dearest, and you know, even if you were well and strong these friends Prince tells us about would not know you. They fear and flee from all mankind. They would fear even you, my gentle little master."

Prince said nothing, but the busy little mind was at work. What was the old, old story, he could now but half recall? Was it not that all the beasts of the forest were pledged to befriend a helpless child? Yes, surely that was it.

Prince pondered till Jack-a-boy fell fast asleep.

At last he heaved a deep sigh. "No, I fear it is not possible," he murmured.



“What isn’t possible? Tell me about it, Prince,” said Rags. “Perhaps I can help you.”

Prince, nothing loath, unfolded his plan. “Oh, Rags,” said he, “if we could only get Jack-a-boy there the rest would be easy.”

Rags glanced lovingly at the frail little form on the bed, then replied, “Surely love will find the way. It always does.”

And it did.



## CHAPTER II

### FAIRY LOVE ALL SHOWS THE WAY

SUDDENLY, a brilliant light flashed up in the darkness. And in the light a tiny form, clad in white, appeared. Soft golden curls clustered around the dainty brow. Pure, innocent blue eyes danced in the merry little face.

“Yes, indeed, Kit Kat! Yes, indeed, Bow-Wow! Love always finds the way. I am Fairy Love All. And I have come to help you. You love Jack-a-boy, you say. Now show that love by service. You remember how the rats helped Cinderella? Here is my carriage at the door. Get you into the harness and do the same, and we will have Jack-a-boy to the Mola Forest ere the moon sets to-night.”

So saying, she touched Jack-a-boy with her



magic wand, and lo! as though carried by unseen hands, he passed from his shut-in room out into the cool night air.

A tinkle of a tiny bell in Fairy Love All's wee white hand, and the astonished little lad rested on cushions of softest down, in Fairy Love All's silver hued chariot.

"Off!" cried she.

Could it be possible? Ere the faithful little friends in the harness could tire, the tree-tops of the Mola Forest waved their giant branches against the moonlit sky. There they paused.

"Farewell, Jack-a-boy! Farewell, Prince and Rags! I leave you in good hands," cried Fairy Love All. "My duty lies in the world beyond. Take this staff of silver, Jack-a-boy. While you carry it no danger can come near you, nor can you feel cold, or hunger, or sickness." Then she disappeared, leaving the bewildered little group at the forest edge.

But some one else was watching over them. It was the man in the moon! He smiled down and said, "Welcome to Beast-land,



## Fairy Love All Shows the Way 15

Jack-a-boy! Enter and see for yourself all the wonders of which Prince has told you!"

Then to each and every beast in the forest the man in the moon whispered, "The little lame child comes to you. Care for him tenderly, for Fairy Love All's sake. Little squirrel, run down and greet him first," he called to his merry little friend.



## CHAPTER III

### THE SQUIRREL AT HOME

THE squirrel, from his nest in the tree-top, tripped lightly along the branch, then ran daintily down the trunk, and, with tail erect, sat at Jack-a-boy's feet.

"Oh! see the squirrel!" cried he. "Show me your home! Will you, squirrel? I am very much interested in you and your family."

"Come with me then, and you will see how the squirrels live."

A wave of the magic wand, and Jack-a-boy, Rags, and Prince found themselves in the tree-top.

The mother squirrel and her babies, feeling perfectly safe in their warm nest of moss and leaves, had curled their tails over their bodies and gone to sleep.



“Wake up, squirrel town!” cried Red Squirrel. “Wake up! Here are visitors!”

Up they jumped; but the babies, scarcely waiting to say, “How do you do?” scampered away.

To them, “Wake up!” meant “get breakfast!”

The little fellows soon returned. Each grasped a nut in his slender toes. They sat up straight, with their tails curled over their backs, and nipped off the shell in little bites, turning the nut around with their toes as easily as Jack-a-boy could have done with his fingers.

Their breakfast finished, the squirrel children scampered off for a frolic. What fun they had, running up and down the branches, tweaking each other's tails, pelting each other with nuts, playing hide-and-seek with mother. How skilfully they ran down the tree trunk. It seemed no harder for them than climbing up.

Jack-a-boy wondered at this.



Seeing his puzzled look as he watched, Red Squirrel said, "Look! It's easy enough, Jack-a-boy." He then proceeded to turn all his toes around so that the nails pointed backward. "This makes it just as easy for me to run down a tree as up," he explained.

"Red Squirrel," said Rags, "don't you find it very cold here in winter?"

"Oh, this is only my summer home. You must see my winter residence. It is as snug as I can make in a hole in the side of the old oak tree. I gather my store of nuts in the early fall and hide them near by. When winter comes on, I crawl into my nest of leaves, curl up and go to sleep. I rather imagine these would be cold quarters."

At that moment, Jack-a-boy gasped, "Do look at those children! They are all falling!"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Red Squirrel. "Why, those are the flying squirrels! I don't believe they could fall if they tried."

"Flying squirrels?" said Jack-a-boy. "Why, can squirrels fly?"



“Well, some can come pretty near it,” said Red Squirrel. “I’ll tell you how it is. They have loose skin running from the fore legs to the hind ones. When one of the little fellows is standing or walking, this skin hangs loose like a ruffle. When he wishes to go any place in a great hurry, he runs to the top of the nearest tree. Then spreading out his legs, so that the skin is drawn tight like a sail, he makes a flying leap through the air, striking near the foot of another tree, a long distance away. He is up this and off again like a flash. He does not exactly fly, but it looks so much like it that people call him a flying squirrel.

“Down on the ground you will meet another of our family, little Chipmunk,” continued Red Squirrel. “He is a dear shy little fellow, and you will find him at home only in the wood where the shadows are heavy and the hills are steep. Where old logs and stumps abound, there look for him. You can’t mistake him. His color is rusty red



brown above and white beneath. On his back he wears five black stripes and two white ones.

“His body is slender and graceful and his fur short and glossy. His tail is not quite so bushy as mine, though it is very pretty.

“You may see him some morning sitting on the top of an old stump, still as a statue. Approach too close, and away he will scurry into one of his many homes in the earth. Under a broad stone you will find the mouth of his burrow.

“Lift the stone and a narrow crooked passage a foot or two long with an enlarged chamber at the end is seen. He has hollowed this with his own tiny hands. On the floor is his bed of leaves, and possibly a few acorns or chestnut shells. He always has several homes and when threatened with danger in one, flies to another and safer retreat.

“You know I told you his tail is not bushy. Do you see why? It would be very inconvenient on a wet day to have a long bushy



tail to drag through the entrance way to his house.

“But see, Jack-a-boy, there comes my friend Blue Jay ! He is a jolly good fellow. I know you will enjoy him.”



## CHAPTER IV

### A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW

PRINCE'S golden eyes glittered as "Jay! Jay! Jay!" was screamed close to his ear.

"Good-morning, mine enemy!" began the saucy bird. "Oh, no, you won't eat me, because our Fairy Love All's magic wand is right here."

"Indeed, Blue Jay, I had no intentions of doing such a thing," returned Prince, in a very dignified tone of voice. "I don't eat my neighbors. Now, sir, as for *you* ——"

"Never mind! Never mind! That'll do! oo! oo! oo!"

"But Jay, *you* don't, do you?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"Don't? Don't what?"

"Don't eat your neighbors?"

"Well, no, not exactly."



"Oh, Blue Jay, you know you do!" said Red Squirrel. "We both do. Now let's be honest. Jack-a-boy will understand. We both are particularly fond of fresh eggs and little ones from the song-birds' nests."

"Well yes, but I don't consider them my neighbors. You are my neighbor, Red Squirrel. Do you know what the hunter whistled down at the foot of the tree last night?"

"Oh, ho! Blue Jay and Red Squirrel! You are a pair of wicked thieves! But little rascals, I believe we folks all love you! We do! oo! oo! oo! Ho! He! Ho!"

Then this blue plumed, fun loving bandit danced up and down the oak branch, sliding from side to side, bowing right and left, lowering his body, flattening his crest and drooping his wings. In fact, altogether behaving in such a ridiculous manner, that Jack-a-boy realized at last what it meant to be, "Crazy as a jay."

"I'll tell you something else, too, Jack-a-boy," said Red Squirrel. "If you have any



valuables where Jay can reach them, put them away, for he is a great collector, and hides where it is hard to find. So be careful of your pennies and your buttons and your rings. But in spite of his mischievous tricks, he is our best friend, and never fails to warn bird and beast when danger is near. He never, never gives a false alarm, either."



## CHAPTER V

### A STORY BY BRER RABBIT

ALL this time Blue Jay's eyes were on the ground beneath the tree. Suddenly, he exclaimed,

"Ho! there goes Brer Rabbit! Hi there! Wait a minute! We're coming down."

Down went the entire party.

"Well, this is luck! Raggley Ear, the story-teller! Come, tell us your latest story!" said Blue Jay and Red Squirrel in a breath.

"He! He! He!" chuckled Raggley Ear. "It's the old fox again. Caught sure enough this time! Down in my home I have a family of young rabbits, very tender and toothsome, according to Sly Boots' ideas.

"You know, little man," he continued, addressing Jack-a-boy, "we wild rabbits live in holes in the ground, which we dig with our



claws. Sometimes many of us live together. Our home is then called a warren.

"The holes are not dug too wide, lest the dogs get at us, and we are always careful to have more than one way out.

"Well, early one morning last week, when I popped my head out of the door to have a look at the weather, whom should I see standing there, but Reynard, the fox.

"'Good-morning,' said he. 'What a nice clean house you have there in the sand. But the entrance is rather narrow. Why don't you dig out the side walls?'

"'Perhaps you are right,' I replied, 'I'll think it over.'

"I spent several days enlarging the front entrance, under the root of an old maple tree. Reynard sat by in the shadow, grinning his approval. I could see him lick his chops in anticipation of the feast soon to be his. The end came this morning.

"Up, up he crept upon our home, sly as a mouse. He glanced a moment at the yawning



mouth, then made a quick dash into it. Alas! poor Reynard! His head stuck fast! He could neither get in nor out!

"The family slipped out the back door. The children must learn to know the fox, and Mother Cottontail thought this a fine opportunity to teach them.

"Just as I came away, I saw my five bonny babies sitting in a row, gazing at the fox. And I heard their mother say, 'Children, this —is —a — fox! He—will—eat—you—if he gets a chance!'

"Ring, the fox hound, passed me on the way and I rather think that he'll have an interesting story to tell at home to-night.

"But whom have we here?" said Rabbit, "only one bird in the forest wears the German flag on his head, and that is Red Headed Woodpecker."



## CHAPTER VI

### HOW THE WOODPECKER CAME

“WELL! Well! Well! My old friend Rag-gley Ear!”

“My dear Red Headed Woodpecker! How do you do? Where did you come from?”

“Just down from Manitoba,” replied Red Headed Woodpecker, in a voice like a tree-toad. “My mate and I are building a nest in yonder maple tree.”

“May I see it?” asked Jack-a-boy.

“Yes, indeed. Come right over. You see we first select a dead branch. In this we make a round hole just large enough for an entrance.”

“I don’t see how a little bird like you can cut such a large hole in the hard wood.”

“Oh, the wood is not very hard, and our bills are strong and sharp. We stand on the trunk of the tree, holding tight with our



## How the Woodpecker Came 29

claws, two toes pointing forward, two backward, at the same time bracing ourselves with our spiked tails. In a short time, we chip out an opening. Then we dig deep down into the limb. Sometimes it takes three weeks to finish the nest. When it is quite large enough, my mate collects the little chips of wood that have been cut off in boring and covers the floor of our home. On these she lays her eggs."

"My, you are a beautiful bird, Red Headed Woodpecker! I never saw a prettier. Where did you get that brilliant red head? the white breast and tail covering? the glossy black body?"

"I'll tell you, Jack-a-boy, if you will promise me not to repeat it. I am just a wee bit ashamed of this little history.

"Many, many years ago, an old woman lived in a hut in the wood.

"One day she sat sewing by the fireside. She wore a red cap, a black dress, and a white apron, tied in a big bow behind.



“‘’Tis time to make my evening meal,’ she murmured.

“Rising, she laid aside her sewing, and prepared some cakes to bake in the coals.

“A timid knock was heard at the door.

“‘Come in!’ called the old lady from her place by the fire.

“A feeble old man crept slowly into the room. ‘Give me to eat!’ he said, ‘for I faint with hunger! You may surely have the first thing for which you wish, if you will grant my prayer.’

“‘Surely I will!’ and she made in haste a great large cake.

“With its baking, the kindness in her heart seemed to grow less.

“‘That is entirely too large a cake to give away,’ she said. ‘I will bake another.’

“But when this was baked, it, too, seemed to her narrow soul too generous a gift for the old man.

“Then she baked a tiny, tiny little cake, so small she scarce could see it. But the last



remnant of good will passed out of her heart as the cake baked.

“‘I’ll give him none of my good cakes at all,’ she said. ‘Here, old man, take this crust and begone.’

“The old man passed out into the darkness, and the hard-hearted old woman sat gazing into the fire.

“Suddenly she exclaimed, ‘I was a selfish old woman! I wish I were a bird, and could fly to the poor man with the best cake on the shelf.’


“No sooner were the words uttered than lo! the old woman disappeared, and from that day she was never seen again.

“The next morning a new bird clung to the tree trunk, a bird who must ever pick in its side for her living. She wore a black suit, with apron of white tied behind. A red cap sat upon her head. That was my great-great-great-grandmother. Very few birds look like the mothers of the race, but all red-headed woodpeckers do.”



“And do you still dig in the tree trunks for your food?”

“Yes, we do. But we don't think that hard. Our bills are well suited to the purpose, and our tongues, too. When you see a woodpecker tapping at a dead limb, you may know that he is hunting for insects, grubs, and beetles that live in the dead wood. He bores in the wood until he reaches them. Then his bill cannot open wide enough in the hole to reach them, so what must he do? Here his tongue comes to his aid. His tongue is like a harpoon. Do you know what that is? And he can dart it out until it is twice as long as the bill. Besides being barbed, it is very slimy, and eggs and little flies will stick to it. When he has found his dinner, he darts out his tongue, strikes it into the unlucky grub and that is the end of it. But there, I see our friend Rabbit is becoming very impatient. I won't keep you any longer. Good-bye! Perhaps we may meet again.”





## CHAPTER VII

### HOW RABBIT BABIES LEARN THEIR LESSONS

THE rabbit was impatient, and rather impatiently said,

“Jack-a-boy! I am going up to our playground! Will you come with me?”

“I should like to go very much,” replied Jack-a-boy.

“I’ve been thinking of that fox down at your home, and I am very much surprised that you so easily outwitted him. I always thought him the wildest creature of the forest.”

“So he is. But every animal must have tricks by which to mislead the enemy. Mothers spend many, many hours teaching their little ones these tricks by which they are to save their lives many times later on.”

“Tell me about the tricks, will you?” pleaded Jack-a-boy.



“Well, now let me see. The first trick the children are taught is ‘Lie low and say nothing.’ That is very easily understood.

“Then there is ‘Freezing.’ ‘Freezing’ is simply turning into a statue.”

Prince and Rags, a little tired of being left out of the conversation, tried this last named trick. How Raggley Ear laughed as he called out, “It won’t do! Rags is too white and Prince too black! You see, we creatures of the forest are so nearly the color of the things about us that when one ‘freezes,’ it is almost impossible to distinguish him from surrounding objects.

“You should have seen my babies learning to freeze yesterday. As long as Mother Cottontail’s white cushion tail went bobbing away through the woods the children ran their best to keep up with her. But the instant mother stopped and froze every little cottontail did likewise. Not perfectly of course, but a pretty fair imitation.

“It is a very bright family, I assure you.



## Rabbit Babies Learn Their Lessons 35

They look very cute as they sit imitating mother wobbling her nose to keep her smeller keen, or with their tiny claws making awkward attempts to comb their ears like she does. They have begun to dress their coats, too, and to bite the burrs from vests and socks.

“Curley told me this morning that the only water fit for a rabbit to drink is dew from the brier bush. When I asked why, Molly replied exactly in her mother’s voice, ‘Water that has touched the earth must surely bear some taint.’

“But here is the playground, and you can watch Mother Cottontail as she plays with the children. It is not all play, however. In their games, they are ever learning the great lesson of life,—how to escape the enemy.”

Mother Cottontail sat up on her white furry cushion.

“Thump!” went her padded back feet on the ground, making so loud a noise that our three little friends concluded some giant



animal must be pawing about in the woods beyond.

"That means 'Freeze,'" explained Raggley Ear. Each little rabbit, suiting the action to the signal, froze instantly.

"Thump! Thump!" went mother's hind foot again.

As each little fellow walked demurely up to his parent, Jack-a-boy said, "Why, I do believe 'Thump! Thump!' meant, 'Come here! Come here!'"

"Quite right," said Raggley Ear. "I believe you would soon learn the signals yourself. See whether you can tell this one."

"Thump! Thump! Thump!"

Every baby ran for dear life, amidst the shouts of Prince, Rags, and Jack-a-boy. "It means 'Run! Run! Run!'" they cried in chorus, "doesn't it?"

Now they play hide-and-seek. Mother Cottontail runs a short distance, then gives the signal "Freeze!" Off she scampers. "Thump! Thump!" and away each baby flies. But



## Rabbit Babies Learn Their Lessons 37

Mother Cottontail is nowhere in sight. Then what do these wise little learners do? Searching carefully, they find her foot scent. Following this strange guide, they work out the trail and shout with glee as they find her hidden among the briars.

Before hiding again, Mother Cottontail "winds," that is, she zigzags so that the trail is so crooked the children are a long time in working it out. By that time Mother Cottontail is so far away that they lose the scent altogether, and cannot find her.

"A good trick to play on the dogs," she says on her return.

"Thump!" went little Curley at Jack-a-boy's feet.

"That means, 'get out of my ground or fight,'" interpreted Raggley Ear.

"Oh, I am so scared!" said Jack-a-boy, laughing. "I can't fight! Who will help me? Shall I run to the brier bush? That is where Mother Cottontail went."

"No! no! the brier bush won't help you. She



is our best friend. To every other animal she is an enemy, but because we never climb after her roses like the mice and squirrels; or knock them off like the cattle; or twitch them off with long tails like the opossum; or break them down with hoofs like the deer, she is our friend and protector. When danger threatens we fly to her, sure that she is ever ready with thousands of keen daggers to help and defend us."

"Who is our next best friend, Molly?" asked the father rabbit.

"Water! jump in and swim away, laughing at the hounds on the bank. Water kills the scent. The dog is helpless, and returns to his master without any little bunny."

While the little folks are busy learning in their play, the father rabbits have a gay time. Rags and Prince join in the sport, and cover themselves with glory, for city folks are rarely so clever as the wildlings of the wood. You should see them! Round and round they go! They leap over everything in the grounds.



## Rabbit Babies Learn Their Lessons 39

They play leap-frog like small boys, jumping over each other's backs. The most skilled college athlete cannot equal them in the running high jump.

Sometimes the rabbits gather together in the middle of an open space, and creep about close to the ground. Suddenly, they rise to their hind legs and hop slowly about as though dancing a stately minuet.

A loud squeak from some rattle-brained youngster and off they run hurry-scurry, with many a wild leap and shout of fear. Shortly after they return, quiet and sedate and solemn as the much quoted judges. It's all a joke.

"Curley," said Jack-a-boy, "do you know how to box? My tame rabbits at home do."

"Of course I do. All rabbits can do that."

"Fluff, come here! Jack-a-boy wants to see a boxing match."

The two rabbits stand up on their hind legs, face to face, and cuff each other soundly, at the same time hopping slowly around in a circle. Jack-a-boy could not see the blows,



but he could hear the sounds as they landed on Bun's ribs.

Soon the play ended. The rabbits slipped off, one by one to hunt their supper of tender grass, or the bark of young trees which they easily gnaw off with their chisel-like teeth.



## CHAPTER VIII

### A DISAPPOINTED FOX AND A CUNNING DUCK

JACK-A-BOY, Rags and Prince lay down, the earth for a pillow, and fell into a deep dreamless sleep. Just as the sun rose in the east Jack-a-boy roused from his slumbers.

A flash of yellow passed before his eyes, and there stood a fox in the path! My, but he was a beauty! One foot was upraised, his fine brush moved languidly from side to side. His great eyes glanced fearlessly into Jack-a-boy's.

"Kindly allow me to pass," said he.

Jack-a-boy, not to be outdone in politeness, stepped aside. The fox passed on, much to the boy's disappointment. He went slowly along the road, his eyes cast down, his brow wrinkled as though in deep thought. He seemed to have forgotten that such a thing as



a boy existed. Once out of sight though, and you should have seen him ! A wild burst of speed, marvelous jumps, queer little turns and jerks, all showed his exultation at having so easily escaped one who, as he supposed, had lain in wait for him.

Prince, bearing the silver wand, pursued him. Rapping him lightly on the head, he said, "That is my master, the little lame child. Fairy Love All brought him to the forest, and you are to make him welcome, or bring down upon your head her great displeasure.

"The boy is here to learn all possible of your life. He loves you and would treat you as a brother."

Fox, whether it was the magic wand or not I cannot say, turned and retraced his steps.

"Please forgive me," he said, "I did not understand, I will ——

"Hi ! there ! What is that ?"

Helter-skelter ! Away went the fox again.



From the dark little stream on the other side of the wood, rose a bird. To Fox, it suggested five or six more birds, downy little fellows, hiding among the roots and grasses. A wood duck's family was too good a breakfast to be neglected, even for Fairy Love All's sake.

"I'll be back soon," he shouted, just as he disappeared.

Foreseeing his purpose, and trusting to defeat it, Wood Duck gave the signal "Hide" to her babies and then alighted near the little group.

She herself was safe, for near her lay the magic wand. The little brood, wherever they were, had heard the mother's cry of warning and so well did they hide that all Fox's cunning failed to find them.

Fox, disappointed at not spying out the ducklings' hiding-place, returned.

"Good-morning, Wood Duck," said he. "How are the children this morning?"

"All very well, very well and very busy too, learning how to dress their feathers,—



how to dive for food,—how to escape the hunter,—how to hide in the grass and rushes when any of your family threaten to devour them.”

“Are your children born in the water?” asked Jack-a-boy.

“Oh, no indeed, they are born in the wood. I lay my eggs in a nest in a hollow tree.

“How to get the babies to the water is quite a problem, for, with their short legs and webbed toes, walking is not easy. So, just as soon as they are hatched, I take them to the water.

“You have seen your cat carry her kittens in her mouth, have you not?

“Just so, I take my downy little ducklings in my mouth, and fly with them to the water’s edge. Usually my family is large, and sometimes I make as many as a dozen trips before the children are all at the lakeside.

“Then we start into the water. The babies take to it at once, and swim as naturally as they eat or drink.



“Well, Fox, I guess those babies have been kept hiding long enough. I will go take them out for a little exercise. Good-bye.”

The duck shot straight up into the air as though thrown up by a spring, then disappeared quickly over the hill.



## CHAPTER IX

### FOXES AT HOME

"COME with me, Jack-a-boy," said the fox, "and I will show you my home and wife and babies."

Jack-a-boy's blue eyes danced with pleasure as they all trotted off towards Reynard's den.

"Fox," said Rags, "we have heard and read a great deal about your thousand tricks. Won't you tell us which you think the best?"

"Well now, Rags, it all depends on whom you are trying to trick. Suppose you were a great hound belonging to a man with a gun. Suppose you were Ring. I would treat you exactly as I treated him, yesterday.

"He was getting rather too close for comfort, and just to give him a little trouble I stepped into the stream, though I don't much like to wet my feet. I trotted along in the



water for some distance. Then I came out and sat down on a stone to rest. Ring came racing along the trail until he reached the running water. Here, he was balked. He trotted up and down both banks, trying to scent where I had left the brook. I sat on my stone and laughed at the stupid fellow. So earnestly did he work, that he did not see me when I raised myself on my hind legs to get a better glimpse of what he was doing.

“Finally he found the trail, but it was so stale that he could scarcely follow it. I left him working slowly up the hill and went into the woods to take a nap.

“Perhaps our most clever trick is ‘possum.’ Even our wise brother man is often deceived in this way.

“I remember once my father was caught in a severe storm out on the prairie. He lay down under the shelter of a stone wall till it should pass. Old Farmer Jenks came along with five large cottontail rabbits that he had captured in the wood. Father saw that he was



fairly caught, and quick as a flash decided that only the 'possum trick could save his life. The next instant he lay stretched upon the ground, apparently dead.

“‘Bill! Bill!’ shrieked the old man in wild excitement. ‘Do come here! What do you think? An old fox has gone and killed himself right in the path. Guess he must have jumped from the wall and fallen down and broken his neck.’

“Then he prodded father with his cane, lifted the tail, exclaiming admiringly, ‘Finest brush I ever saw!’ poked his ribs and smoothed his head, all the time commenting on his rare good fortune in coming across the unfortunate fox.

“Laying the rabbits down beside the lifeless form, he hobbled off to tell Bill the wonderful news.

“You may imagine that father waited only long enough for the old man to get out of sight. Then seizing two of the rabbits, he was off like a streak, never stopping till he reached



home. I should like to have seen the old man on his return. Wouldn't you?

"Every fox will play 'possum when caught in a trap, and if the trapper is unwary enough to unlock the spring in the open, the fox nearly always is successful in making his dash for liberty. Here we are at home."

"A queer looking house," said Prince. "Only a pile of dirt."

"That's not it, stupid. That is only the earth that came from the hole."

"Hole?" echoed Jack-a-boy. "Where is the hole?"

"Now, friends, when a really cute fox digs a new den, he brings all the dirt out at the first hole made. From that he digs a tunnel into some distant thicket. Then closing up the first-made door, he ever after uses the entrance in the thicket. Here we are."

"Oh! oh! oh!" came from the three friends. "Aren't they cute?"

There in the doorway sat four little foxes, bright little bundles of fur that looked like



little woolly lambs, with long, thick legs and innocent expressions.

They played about in the sunshine until a slight sound made them scurry underground.

Just at that moment their mother returned, bringing in her mouth a plump little hen. A low call and out tumbled the babies.

They rushed on the chicken, and tusseled and fought over it. Their mother kept a sharp lookout for enemies, but frequently bestowed upon her darlings a glance full of pride and love.

Once the hen almost escaped. The babies ran after it like a pack of young hounds, but failed to catch it.

Mother Fox, following in its wake, killed the victim and returned it to the children to devour.

Mother Fox finds food for the babies until they are big enough to hunt for themselves. No easy task to provide for the hungry little mouths.

Jack-a-boy watched her return one evening



with sixteen field-mice in her mouth. How do you suppose she had carried them ?

First she laid them on the ground, the bodies at a broad angle and the tails crossing each other. By gripping the tails where they crossed, all the mice were carried at once, half hanging on each side of her mouth. She told Jack-a-boy that she was sure that she could carry chickens in the same way, only she could never find enough to make the experiment.

The baby foxes must be taught to hunt for themselves, and Jack-a-boy had the privilege of seeing their first lesson. It was in the hollow close to the den, where a colony of field-mice gamboled in the moonlight.

In teaching baby foxes, as, indeed, in teaching babies of any kind, the main thing is example. Mother Fox signals, "Lie still and watch !"

They listen with ears erect, till a faint squeak tells that the game is near. Mother rises on tiptoe in the grass, as high as she can, for the



only way to locate a mouse is by the faint squeak and the slight movement of the grass.

A sudden pounce and mother rises with a delicious young field-mouse in her mouth.

"Come, do like mother!" is the next signal. The four babies imitate, clumsily enough, mother's poses and starts and gestures.

When, at length, one of the babies catches his own game, for the first time in his life, he grinds his little milk teeth in savage delight.

Ere long all of the babies have become acquainted, at least, with the methods of mouse hunting, and must scamper away back to their den.

Next day the children are taught to play 'possum. A saucy red squirrel lives in a tree near the den. A long standing quarrel exists between him and Mother Fox. "Now," says she, "I'll have my revenge on Red Squirrel and teach the babies a lesson at the same time.

"Lie still, and watch," she purrs, as she lies in the thicket.



The babies at the door look out inquisitively. "What now?" the little faces plainly say. But they obediently follow the simple command.

Mother Fox knows full well Red Squirrel's weakness,—curiosity.

She lies flat in the sun, under Red Squirrel's tree.

Looking down, he calls out, "Wake up! sleepy head!"

But Mother Fox never moves a muscle.

"Lazy thing! Lazy thing! Wake up! Wake up!"

To emphasize his remark, he throws a nut right down on Mother Fox's nose.

Still she remains silent and lifeless.

"Can she be sleeping?" ask the little faces in the thicket.

Down creeps little Red Squirrel, closer and yet closer.

Making a bold dash across the open, he chatters from the tree on the opposite side, "Lazy thing! Lazy thing! Good for noth-



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ing! Good for nothing! Good for nothing!  
Wake up! Wake up!"

But Mother Fox does not stir.

Reckless Red Squirrel! Curiosity is his end.

Slowly he creeps up towards the fox, nearer yet nearer! He can almost feel her hot breath on his furry little sides. Ah, little Red Squirrel, it is too late now!

Quick as a flash, the cruel mouth closes upon him. And another victim is carried to the den for the babies to torment and then devour.

Jack-a-boy's blue eyes filled with tears.

"We must live, you know, Jack-a-boy, and the squirrel was foolish," whispered Raggley Ear. "That is the only way the children can be taught to provide for themselves."



## CHAPTER X

### BUFFALO TELLS HIS STORY

LIVING with the foxes was very delightful to Jack-a-boy, but he felt that he must be going on, if he would make the most of Fairy Love All's generosity.

The magic wand comes to his aid, and the next morning he and his friends awake far away, on the side of Mount Carmel. They struck a path, evidently made by man. As they passed along the path they came to an enclosure near a forest. "This must be the place belonging to the great man of the mountain," said Rags. "Let us look inside. He is always friendly and he always has some animal in his wood."

At that instant a head peered over the hedge and a man's voice was heard saying, "Come in and welcome. There is a huge



buffalo back in the wood. Perhaps you will like to see him, though he is a surly old fellow. Don't try to be too friendly."

Leading the way into the wood the man said, "There he is," and then he left them. Jack-a-boy saw a great shaggy animal, his huge head and shoulders adding to his naturally majestic appearance. The hair on his head, neck, and shoulders grew thick and abundant, forming a shaggy mane. Along his back the hair of the head and shoulders was continued in a shaggy line forming a prominent back ridge. His tail was short and ended in a tuft. His horns were small and his hoofs split like those of a cow or sheep.

"Good-morning, Buffalo," said Jack-a-boy. "We have come to spend a little time with you."

"You will find me a dull enough companion," replied the buffalo, shaking his great shaggy head. "How I long for the good old days when with my companions I roved the prairie with none to dispute our right save the



Indian, wild as ourselves. Those were our golden days. Alas that they can come no more."

"Tell me about them, Buffalo," said the wise little boy, remembering how well the old folks love to tell of the days when they were young.

Buffalo tossed back his flowing mane and seemed again to renew his youth as he looked into the past.

As though unconscious of his companions, he began,

"I was leader of as fine a herd as ever crossed the prairie. Wherever I led the herd followed without question. There were days of peace and days of war. And one we enjoyed as well as the other. There were times when for months we galloped over the plains feeding plentifully upon the juicy grasses and herbs growing there so abundantly. When we were annoyed by the insects, we rolled in the mud knowing well such action would afford relief.



“Were we never attacked? Yes, of course, but we rather enjoyed that. Many a grizzly has tried his strength with mine. My horns are short, but they do effective work. The grizzly never lived to tell the tale. I have seen two or three buffaloes attacked by a whole pack of wolves, hungry ones at that. The wolves, with all their cunning and strength, were no match for the other animals.

“Our greatest sport as well as the greatest danger came when the Indians rushed upon us. They know how to hunt, I can tell you.

“Sometimes one of their number dresses himself in a buffalo skin, and crawling on all fours joins the herd. He is wily enough to coax some youngster away from the herd. Then he can do as he pleases with him. But best of all we love to see the Indian on his mustang, his hair flung to the breeze, galloping after the herd.

“A long, hissing noise. Perhaps one of our number falls. Perhaps the arrow speeds wide of its mark and on we rush.



“Again he flings a lasso. Do you know what that is? A rope with a sort of sailor knot at one end. The noose is thrown over the luckless buffalo’s horn. A quick pull on the rope tightens the knot. The buffalo falls to the ground and is captured. But that is not so bad as what sometimes happens. Naturally, we follow a leader and sometimes we do so rather blindly. Taking advantage of our weakness, the hunters drive us on till we reach the edge of a precipice. Then circling around the herd with shouts and cries, they drive them on till too late to retreat, the leaders are pushed over its edge followed by their panic-stricken companions.”

“But, Buffalo, you are safe here. I cannot understand why you long for the old days so full of dangers.”

“I always escaped them, Jack-a-boy. I would take all the cold of winter with its scarcity of food, all the worst that I have ever gone through if but for one day I could again be free. But that can never be. The buffalo



herds, like the Indian tribes, are passing away. But here we are at the end of my domain. Across the path you will find a field. Stop there, I think I hear Bob White calling."

"Good-bye, Buffalo. I wish you were going with us. I think I hear the call you spoke of. Is this it? 'Bob White! Bob White! Poor Bob White'?"

"Yes, that is it. Go on a little farther and you will find Bob White himself. Call like he does and he will come to you."

Much pleased with the idea, Jack-a-boy walked along whistling, "Bob White! Bob White! Poor Bob White!"



## CHAPTER XI

### TWO BIRD FRIENDS, BOB WHITE AND LITTLE GROUSE

HIS patience was rewarded. As he neared the field he saw a very handsome bird coming slowly towards him. His throat was pure white, his head marked with black and white, and his short, fat body a rich brown.

“Jack-a-boy,” he said, “if you were another bird I would be very fierce, for you are using the call I save for my mate. Do you want to see her? She is covering the eggs now. They are wonderful! Row within row of pure white eggs! I think there must be a score of them. They will soon be hatched. Then you can see the young ones. They are covered with down and run off with their mother. We both teach them what they must know if they are to grow to be old birds. The secret of keeping them with us is teaching them



how to hide when any danger threatens, and they soon learn to do that well. We, unlike most birds, rarely leave the field where we are born. We live together and you will hear us spoken of as 'a covey of quail.' We do not roost on trees but spend our nights together on the ground. We sit on the ground in a circle, heads all out to watch for enemies, tails in, forming the centre of the circle. You see how much warmer and how much more sociable we can be in this way."

"But what do you do for food in winter?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"We scratch the snow and ice away and get the seeds and grain underneath. Sometimes we find a kind-hearted farmer who lets us have a little of his winter store of grain."

"Don't the storms ever harm you?"

"Yes, indeed, there are winters when whole coveys of quail are buried under the snow, smothered to death in their sleep. But that is too sad to talk about."

"Here is the funniest little bird at my feet,



Bob White. Is he one of your children?" said Jack-a-boy.

"Wait, till I see. No, he is a young grouse. Where did you come from, youngster? You look rather frightened."

"I am. I was born over the river in the swamp, and my mother told me never to come to this side. But I disobeyed, and now I don't know how to get back."

"I guess you are sufficiently punished. Jack-a-boy, can't you help him to find his way home? It is right in your direction."

"Of course I will. Come along, little grouse. Can you walk so far?"

"I think I can fly well enough if I can't walk."

Jack-a-boy and his friends started for the home of the little grouse, Bob White cheering them the while with his merry "Bob White! Bob White!"

"Tell me about yourself, little grouse," said Jack-a-boy.

"There isn't much to tell you, kind friend.



I have nine brothers and sisters. When we were very little we kept close to our mother. As we grew larger we began to wander farther away. But we could always find our mother by saying, 'Peep! Peep!' for she always answered, 'Cluck! Cluck!' But to-day I went too far. When any danger came too near, we squatted down on the ground and kept very quiet. Mother trailed her wing along as though wounded until the attention was drawn away from us to her. When she was sure we were safe, she ran off in the bushes and with a happy 'Cluck! Cluck!' gathered us all back again."

"What do you eat?"

"Berries and spiders and beetles. At night we sleep under mother's wings, though she says that soon we must leave her and look out for ourselves. Oh, I don't want to a bit. To-day was enough for me.

"Mother says that by fall our wings will be strong, and that then we can fly into the trees and roost in the branches.



"She says we must be very careful or the foxes and hunters will catch us. I hope they won't. I do want to see one snow-storm."

"But what will you do for food when the ground is covered with ice and snow?"

"Oh, the buds on many of the trees are very fine eating. And do you know, mother says that feathers will grow on my toes so that it will be just as though I walked on snow-shoes. I do want the winter to come, though I will miss my brothers and sisters, and mother most of all. By next spring I will be a full-grown grouse, and then I will find a mate for myself. Do you know how I get my mate? I drum for her. Next March I will find a log. I stand beside it and spread out my tail, and blow out my feathers until there is no handsomer bird in the swamp. Then I will strike my wings together behind my back. If you are there you will see me do so, and this is what people call the grouse drumming. Perhaps you will not like the music. It sounds as if a small rubber ball were dropped slowly,



and then rapidly bounced on a drumhead. The female grouse must like it, for with it the grouse coaxes her to become his mate."

"Cluck! Cluck! Cluck! Where can that child be?"

"Here I am, mother. I will never, never, never run away again. Jack-a-boy and his cat and dog have brought me home."

The mother turned to thank Jack-a-boy. But he assured her the gratitude was all his, for the little grouse had been very entertaining and instructive.

"You can help me a little, though, if you will," said he. "I wish very much to meet a bear, but I know how very shy he is. Can you tell me where I will be most likely to see him at home?"

"Certainly! Do you see yonder hill? Walk up its steep side, turn a little to the left. There among the thick bushes you will find his bearship. Catch him in the early morning, if you wish to find him in an agreeable humor."



"I had better be off then. Had I not? It's early still."

"Yes, I think that would be wise. Don't think me rude for sending you. Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest is a good rule, you know."

"I am off. Turn to the left, you said, did you not?"

Following Mother Grouse's directions, Jack-a-boy soon found himself at Bear's home. But where was Bear?



## CHAPTER XII

### AN UNSOCIABLE BEAR AND A FRIENDLY FISHERMAN

SUDDENLY there appears, it seems from nowhere, a bear, big and glossy black, with long white teeth and sharp black claws, a creature, Jack-a-boy afterwards learns, as timid as a rabbit, in spite of his great size.

Notwithstanding Fairy Love All's wishes, it is almost impossible for the bear to be friendly with Jack-a-boy and his companions. But he strives to overcome this feeling, and reveals to them something of the life and habits of bear kind.

"Tricks?" said he in reply to Jack-a-boy's question. "Bears haven't very many. Our safety is in our great strength and endurance. If the dogs press too hard and close though, we have a trick called 'Changing Ends,' that is very effective.



"This is a sudden whirl backward, and woe to the unlucky dog who is within reach of the bear's great paw.

"The sudden turn causes the dogs to halt, while the bear speeds on and gets a good lead before the dogs comprehend the trick.

"Sometimes bears are caught. My son was once, not long ago.

"It was the great man of the forest who trapped him. He did not mean to harm him. He only wished to keep him in his woods. So he fastened a collar with a huge chain and a log on it around son's neck.

"At first he tried to strike it off with his great strong paws. Try as hard as he knew how he could not succeed in removing the chain and log. He then dashed down to the river, and taking the log in his front paws, threw it out into the stream, expecting to see it sink and so rid him of it. It sank, only to rise immediately. He tried again and again to sink the log, but always without success.

"At length, he said, 'I'll bury you, old log,



and then see whether you can come back.' So dragging the heavy log back to the woods, he dug a hole and buried it deep. He pawed the earth down hard and firm. Then making one desperate effort, he strained the chain until it broke, and my free-born bear was once more at liberty."

The bear now left Jack-a-boy and proceeded to make a meal of snails, grubs, and worms, which he found in a decayed log. His dessert was blackberries and wild honey.

While the bear ate his dinner, Jack-a-boy amused himself making pictures of the deep tracks Bear had left in the soft earth. They looked for all the world like the footprints of a barefoot boy.

Just as the bear finished his dinner a fisherman came round the turn in the path. He halted and looked a little scared, though he tried to pucker his lips to whistle. He noticed, to his surprise, that the bear looked scared, too, so without waiting to make sure, he made a bold dash as though to strike him.



Bear took to his heels, and racing for life down the hillside, was soon lost to sight.

"Well! I am glad that he has gone!" said the relieved fisherman.

"He is a very nice bear," said Jack-a-boy; "he has just been telling me about how bears live, and now I don't believe he will come back."

"Come down to the stream with me!" said the fisherman, "perhaps I know a great deal about your friend and will tell you!"

"These are my friends, Rags and Prince, Mr. Fisherman. May they come with you, too?" said Jack-a-boy.

"Certainly! Certainly! I would not think of leaving them behind.

"The bear was eating his dinner, was he not? Did you ever see him rob an ant-hill for the ants and their eggs? There is nothing, unless it is molasses, that he likes so well as ants. He knocks the top of their house off with his great paw. And then, putting his lips to the centre of the nest, he draws in a deep



quick breath. This sets up such a current of air that all the ants and their larvæ come whirling up into his mouth."

"Like change through the pneumatic tube in a department store," laughed Jack-a-boy.

"Exactly. He is extremely fond of wild honey, too. When he discovers a decayed tree in which the bees have hidden their store, he knocks it down. Then using all his strength, he tears open the side of the tree, and reaches the honey which he eagerly begins to eat. The bees know that there is no use in trying to sting him, his skin is too thick, a fact of which he is fully aware. So, rather than leave all the honey for him, they join in the feast at their own expense.

"Ah, there he is now! I do not believe any one need fear a bear if he will only keep quiet and let him alone."

"We need not at least. See, Fairy Love All has given me her magic wand. It makes all the beasts of the forest as tame as Rags and Prince."



If Mr. Fisherman heard Jack-a-boy, he did not comprehend. Little folks know and understand a great deal more about fairies than grown-up people possibly can.

“He is a great clumsy fellow,” continued the fisherman, “but I think there is not a beast on the mountain who moves about as quietly as this ungainly bear. Often he will creep through the underbrush, making less noise than a squirrel would do. He rarely disturbs another animal unless it first molests him.

“I once read of a bear who belonged to a king. He was kept in a log hut in the palace grounds. One evening, a child foot-sore and weary, stopped to rest in his cabin. The boy was well-nigh dead with cold and hunger. The bear took him in his great arms and pressed him to his bosom until he revived. Then he divided with him the supper the keeper had brought to him a short time before. For several nights the child returned to the bear. He found each time that the bear



had saved a portion of his food for him. When he lay down to sleep the bear stood guard over him. At last the keeper found the child and attempted to carry him away. The bear became furiously angry, and would have attacked the servant. The story was told to the king, who went himself to see the bear's protégé.

"In some mysterious way the bear realized that the king would befriend the little stranger, and suffered him to lead the child away.

"The king took the child to his castle, where he became a great favorite, and all the comforts and pleasures in the king's power to bestow were given him.

"You may be sure he never forgot his great friend in the wood, who had not only saved his life, but had brought him the best of friends and fortune.

"The baby bears or cubs are quite as playful as young foxes, while their clumsiness makes them even more comical.



“Frequently, when the mother returns home from her search for food, the babies are nowhere to be seen. She calls and coaxes, but they do not come to her, nor do they utter a sound. Mother Bear must search out their hiding-place. What shouts of bear laughter greet the ear when Mother Bear at last discovers where the babies are hidden.

“Sometimes they climb up a tree, and sit and look down with the greatest enjoyment, as mother searches for them in every hole or hollow tree.

“Once in awhile, a little bear climbs up a tree and then does not know how to get down. There he sits and whimpers, while the wind sways him to and fro. When Mother Bear thinks him sufficiently frightened, she climbs the tree after him and carries him back to their hole.

“Most all bears are very fond of fish, and they frequently go fishing on a moonlight night. No, of course they do not use rods like mine. They use their paws. They stand



for hours in the shallow water and wait for the fish to come up the stream. As the fish swims by a bear, he quickly puts his paw under it and flips it out on the bank. Before the fish can recover itself and jump back into the water, the bear has him in his mouth. I have seen them catch frogs in the same way.

“Bears sometimes fight each other. Possibly three or four bears live in the same woods, and it may be that there is a certain dainty bear that they all wish for a wife. Each decides to pay her a visit. The first bear reaches her home. He stands on his hind legs against a tree-trunk. Reaching as high as he possibly can, he scratches and tears the bark with his front claws. Then placing his back against the tree, he turns his head and bites out of the trunk a great mouthful of wood.

“Each bear who comes that way measures his size against his rival’s. If he is larger, he follows him to fight. If he is smaller, he prudently retires.”



"How does the bear live in winter? Can you tell me, Mr. Fisherman?" said Jack-a-boy.

"Oh, yes, he lives in a hole in the ground, or in some hollow tree. Early in the autumn, the bear selects his winter quarters. To this place he carries sticks, leaves, spruce boughs and soft moss. With these he lines his room, lies down and goes to sleep till spring comes again. If his 'Hole Up,' as he calls this winter home, is in the ground, you can easily find it, after the snow falls. There is a little hole right up through the snow, which is all yellow around the edges. Through this he gets air. When there is frost in the air, you can see his breath as it comes up through the hole.

"But, Jack-a-boy, haven't you learned enough about these wild animals? Can't you spend the rest of your time with me?"

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Fisherman, but I think I cannot accept your invitation. Fairy Love All told me that I might stay until I had seen



all of the animals, and I fear it would be impolite not to do so."

"Well, here is my boat. Good-bye, little man! Take good care of the cat and dog. Some time I will meet you again, so be sure to remember what you see. You must tell me all about it."

The trio pushed on. The day wore away till at length the sun sank behind the hill. The little clouds folded themselves in their gray blankets and floated softly over the darkening sky. One by one the stars came out and began their silent march across the heavens.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BEARS IN THE SKY

OUR little friends paused in their journeying and lay down to rest.

Suddenly Prince exclaimed, "Why, Jack-a-boy, I forgot, I know a splendid bear story.

"Look there in the northern sky, a little to the west. Do you see some stars that seem to make a dipper? They really are called 'Great Dipper,' and are part of a group known as the 'Great Bear.'"

"Mother has told me a beautiful legend about the 'Great Dipper,' but I have never heard anything about a bear in the sky."

"Well, there are bears in the sky, two of them, 'Great Bear' and 'Little Bear.'"

"The two stars in the Dipper farthest from the handle are called pointers because they point nearly to the Pole or North Star."

"I know the Pole Star," said Jack-a-boy.



"It is the sailor's best friend, for it always stays in the same part of the sky, and that part he knows is the north."

"The Pole Star is the end of the Little Bear's tail. Now see whether you can find the bears while I tell you their story.

"Many, many years ago, in a land near to the rising sun, there stood a tall mountain. On its summit lived a great and powerful king, called Jupiter.

"He had a very beautiful wife, Queen Juno. Now although the Queen was exceedingly beautiful herself, she was not willing that any other woman should be so. When she looked down into the valleys below her home and saw those who were fair and lovely she became filled with jealousy and longed to harm them.

"At the foot of her mountain home was a dense forest. A beautiful princess lived here. She spent her time hunting the deer and other beasts of the wood. One day she sped far up the mountainside in chase of a deer.



"Now it happened that the Queen that morning walked in that direction.

"When she spied the lovely Princess, her heart was filled with jealous rage, and she determined that she should no more roam the mountain.

"‘Become a bear and be hunted as you have hunted!’ she exclaimed.

"The beautiful Princess fell to the ground. Her soft white hands and feet became huge paws. Her dainty fingers grew into great ugly claws.

"‘What have I done that you should treat me so?’ she tried to exclaim, but only fierce growls came through her jaws. Long coarse hair covered her delicate skin. And so she was compelled to roam the forest, unrecognized by the friends with whom she had hunted day after day.

"Once as she slowly walked through the woods, she came across her only son.

"‘Surely he will know me,’ she thought, ‘his own mother.’



“‘My boy!’ she called, reaching out her arms to fold him close to her bosom.

“But he saw only a savage bear rushing upon him, and raising his hunting spear was about to slay her when King Jupiter stayed his hand. Filled with pity for the unfortunate mother and her child he changed him, too, into a bear and carrying both to the sky, he chained them near the den of the North Star. There you may find them, Great Bear and Little Bear.

“Well, Jack-a-boy, have you found the bears or are you fast asleep?”

“Of course I am not asleep, and I have found the bears, too. See! Here are their pictures!”

Lifting a sharp stick, Jack-a-boy quickly traced the two bears’ portraits upon the soft earth.

“But how did Queen Juno feel when she saw the bears in the sky?”

“She was very angry and begged Old Ocean not to allow them to bathe in his cool



waters. So they prowl round and round the North Star and never sink below the horizon as the sun and moon and other stars do."

"Now go to sleep. Bright and early to-morrow morning you know. We lost time to-day."

Silently the night passed by. The stars sank to rest. The sun peeped shyly above the horizon. Morning stole softly o'er hill and valley. Then our three little travelers rose and resumed their journey.

"What a perfect morning," said Jack-a-boy.  
"How bright and cheerful everything is."



## CHAPTER XIV

### ROBIN RED BREAST AND HIS FAMILY

SOME one was happy for, "Cheer up! Cheer up! Be cheery! Be cheery!" burst through the early morning air from the top-most bough of a near-by tree.

Looking up, Jack-a-boy saw Robin Red Breast perched beside his nest in the fork of a maple branch.

"Come up, Jack-a-boy, and see my babies!" he sang, "the mother is away getting her breakfast, and you can have a good look at them."

Up! Up! Jack-a-boy rose, till he found himself on the branch where the nest hung.

The nest itself was a cup of clay, thickened around the top. It was well moulded and covered inside and out with dry grass.

To the eyes of the father and mother birds, no doubt the children were beautiful. But Jack-a-boy thought them very homely.



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They were covered with gray fuzz. On the sides of their heads were two bulging lumps, which Robin said would open as eyes when the babies were three days old. Their mouths were wide open as though demanding food. No tail of any account was visible, and the wings were nothing like so large as a new born chick's.

What a contrast the handsome father bird was! His head was black, his body olive gray. A vest of ruddy hue adorned his breast. His wings were black with flecks of white on the outer quills. His eyelids were white, his bill yellow and his feet of darker color. His mate, returning with a number of worms, looked very like him, save that her colors were all paler.

How greedily the babies seized the worms! Baby robins are always hungry, always crying, "More! More!" Father and mother both work industriously to provide enough food for their little family.

Leaving the mother to look after the chil-



dren, Robin flew to the ground, beckoning Jack-a-boy to follow. The moment he alighted Robin thrust his bill into the soil, throwing up a little shower of earth. Again and again he did this, sometimes so quickly that he was thrown off his feet by the jerk.

So he went on, never eating a morsel, but gathering the worms until he had four or five wriggling from his bill.

Then he flew back to the nest, and disposing of his load, returned for more. After doing this till it seemed as though the babies in the tree-top must really be stuffed, he sat down at Jack-a-boy's feet.

"Will those children ever grow to look like you?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"Yes, indeed. In about ten days they will be well feathered, and so large that they will crowd the mother quite out of the nest. Then they will be taught how to fly, and how to get their living. In a short time you will not be able to tell the daughters from their mother, or the sons from their father."



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"I wish I could see you teach them to fly," said Jack-a-boy.

"I wish you could, but I can tell you about it, and perhaps that will do as well.

"One fine morning, when the babies are old enough, we determine that they shall learn to use their wings. That day not a morsel of food do we bring them. Instead, we gather the choicest worms, and, perching near the nest in full sight of the fledglings, devour them. The babies cry of course, but we must be cruel for their own good.

"Away we fly and return shortly with more worms which we eat as before. All the time we chirrup, 'Come! Come! little folks, get up and find these delicious morsels for yourselves. They are very fine indeed.'

"Soon the bravest of the little brood stretches his tiny wings and hops to the edge of the nest. There he clings, a little quivering ball of down.

"Mother coaxes, 'Look into the sky! Spread your wings! Now fly!'



"A few awkward attempts and baby robin flies, a tiny flight, only to the nearest branch. But how delighted we are! Robin is fed and petted and coaxed till he very willingly tries again and again his little wings.

"No attention is paid to the little ones in the nest, and seeing themselves in a fair way to be starved, they make up their minds to follow their brother's example. Soon all the little robins are trying their little wings, some timidly, some with greater courage. A few days' practice and away we all fly together. The old home in the tree-top knows us no more.

"I see you admire my red vest, Jack-a-boy. Do you know how it came to be red? It is one of the prettiest stories in bird lore."

"I do not know the story, will you tell it to me, Robin?"

"Long, long ago," began the bird, "there was only one small fire in the whole dreary Northland. An old man and his son watched over the fire, and saw that it never for an in-



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stant stopped burning. Day after day, night after night, they sat patiently watching the embers fade and glow.

“On an evil day the father fell ill.

“White Bear, in the distance, watched. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘the fire will go out and every one in the Northland will perish. Ha! Ha! Ha! Who then so happy as I? The whole Northland will be mine! All mine!’

“For many days the little lad cared for the sick father and kept the fire burning, too. But alas! his puny strength was all too small for so difficult a task. A night came when his strength failed and the child fell asleep at his post.

“White Bear stole silently upon him. He trampled upon the few small coals with his wet feet.

“‘Ha! Ha! Ha!’ he shouted. ‘It is out! Not a spark of fire in the whole Northland! It is mine at last! Not a spark of fire left!’

“Not a spark? Yes, one. And a small



gray brown bird's bright eyes spied it out. Could he save the Northland? He was only a little bird but he would do his best.

"Hour after hour, he patiently fanned the one spark with his wings, till at length it glowed large and bright. He could not risk White Bear's return and destruction of his work. So taking a burning coal in his bill he flew with it to the nearest hut. Coming back again and again, he carried away coal after coal, till every home in the Northland had a portion of the living fire. His feet and breast and bill were burned, but he did not mind that. He had saved the Northland.

"White Bear was mad with rage when he heard the shouts of rejoicing, and saw the fires glowing in all the land. He knew he was beaten forever now, and sullenly returned to his home in an icy cave by the river. Robin's breast, till that day brown, was burned by the fire till it glowed like its embers. From that time it has kept its ruddy hue.

"Now I must make up for lost time! Sixty-



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eight worms every five minutes! That is what those children eat."

A frightened "Cherk! Cherk!" and Robin flew to the tree-top.

Jack-a-boy turned hastily, and there at his feet coiled a huge black snake. Jack-a-boy quivered with terror. Its gaze was not fixed on him, however, but on some object above. At the same instant, he heard from the sumac by the rock, the distressed cry of a Chipping Sparrow. The little bird, perched upon a slender twig, fluttered its wings as though it would fly, but held captive by the steady gaze of the snake, could not make its escape. Nearer and nearer the snake raised itself toward the little frightened bird. Suddenly, all Jack-a-boy's courage returned and seizing the ugly head in his small hand, he threw the snake to the other side of the path. The birdling, released, flew to the topmost bough of the sumac and thrilled his song of thanks to the brave little child.

"Jack-a-boy," said Rags, "that snake might



have bitten you. Why did you not use the magic wand? It was right there."

"I never thought of it, Rags. I only saw that the poor little bird needed help, and I did what I could."

"Dear little chap! Hear him now! Ugh, I am glad that the ugly snake did not get him!"



## CHAPTER XV

### AN ESKIMO PUSSY AND ITS MOTHER.

THE trio again resumed their travels. Days passed, and at length they found themselves in a land covered with ice and snow.

Huge fields of ice floated in the streams. Great icebergs towered above them. Not a creature was in sight.

Suddenly, the sharp-eyed Prince spied a little white furry creature gamboling by the river.

"What is that animal in the distance, Jack-a-boy? Can you tell?" said he.

"It looks like a kitten. Do you think it can be one, Rags?"

"No, it can't," replied the dog. "There are no cats in Eskimo land, so there can't be any kittens. But I know what it is, I am sure. It is a baby seal."



“What makes you think that?”

“I heard a story once which makes me think that I must be right.

“When the Peary Relief Expedition came up here a few years ago, there was a little white kitten aboard the ship. Now the natives had never seen a kitten and they could not speak English. Yet the instant they spied the frolicsome little thing they called, ‘Pussy! Pussy!’

“The gentleman who told me the story said that they were very much puzzled over the matter until they learned that a baby seal is very like a cat, and that the Eskimo word for baby seal sounds like pussy.

“So when I see what looks very like a cat, I conclude that it must be a baby seal. And look! There is its mother.”

A large dark creature rose suddenly from the water and grasped the baby seal in its arms.

Such a pretty picture they made,—the mother with her pretty rounded head, intelligent face and large dark eyes,—the baby, her



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miniature in white, leaning so confidently against her bosom.

"Come here, pretty creature! We won't harm your baby," said Jack-a-boy.

"I know you won't," replied the seal. "But I am sentinel at present and dare not leave my post."

"Do you live there?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"We spend most of our time in the water," replied the seal. "Our small heads, sloping shoulders, and plump bodies tapering toward the tail, make it easy for us to glide through it. Our short legs are well suited to swimming, too, though the hind ones do not move very freely. They are set far back, and are so bound down by the skin that they look as though they were part of the tail."

"It must be very cold in the water. Isn't it?"

"It probably is very cold in the water, but we do not feel the cold. Our thick fur and the layer of fat under the skin are a great protection against the icy water."



"What do you eat?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"Fish, mostly."

"Don't you ever come ashore?"

"Oh, yes, indeed! We go there to feed our young or to sleep in the sunshine. You remember I said when you first came here that I am the sentinel. Just below me, on the rocks a great many seals are sleeping. My duty as sentinel is to warn them when any danger threatens.

"The Eskimo are always trying to capture us, for we are very valuable to them. They use our flesh for food, the fat for fuel and for giving light, and the skin for clothing and for covering their huts and boats."

"You don't look a bit like my mother's seal-skin coat," said Jack-a-boy.

"No, indeed; my soft fur is quite hidden by these long coarse hairs. When the skins are prepared these are pulled out and the soft yellowish fur is left underneath. The fur is then dyed a pretty brown. Now I must leave you. Here comes the relief sentinel."



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“Good-bye,” called Jack-a-boy, as the seal took Pussy in her arms and dropped into the water below the rock.

“Let us stay here and watch for the seals to come from their sun-bath and take their swim. How I wish we could saw down a little tree and build a fire,” said Jack-a-boy. “It would make it very much more cheerful in the snow.”



## CHAPTER XVI

### A CLEVER LITTLE WOOD-CUTTER

“SAW a tree down! Saw a tree down!” said a voice at Jack-a-boy’s side. “Why I can do that, just as easily as the lumberman, and just as well, too. Come over here and see me.”

Jack-a-boy approached the voice, and saw in the moonlight a timid little animal that Prince introduced as Beaver.

Beaver was a queer looking little fellow, about one foot high and two or three feet long. He wore a coat of soft brown fur. His eyes were small and far apart, his ears tiny, and his nose blunt.

“Where is your saw, Beaver?” asked Jack-a-boy.

“Right here,” replied Beaver, opening his mouth and showing Jack-a-boy his strong, sharp teeth.



He at once put his saw to use, on a small tree that grew near by. He gnawed and gnawed away until he was nearly through the trunk. Then he jumped aside to see whether the tree was beginning to bend. Seeing it was still straight, he set to work again.

"C-r-e-a-k!" said the tree.

The busy little worker ran away just in time. The next instant the tree lay upon the ground.

Jack-a-boy was delighted. "That is the prettiest cut I ever saw, Beaver. You are a wonderfully clever little wood-cutter."

"Not so very! Jack-a-boy, not so very!"

"Come here, youngsters," he called to his two sons, who were romping by the stream. "Gnaw all the branches off this tree, and cut the trunk into small pieces. If you will come down to the stream with me, Jack-a-boy, I will show you our home."

As Beaver led the way, Jack-a-boy noticed that his broad oar-shaped tail was not covered with fur as his body was, but that instead,

L. of C.



little scales like fish scales covered it all over. His hind feet, too, told Jack-a-boy that Beaver's home must be in the water, for he noticed a thin skin between the toes that showed he was fitted for swimming.

"In summer-time," said Beaver, "we live in holes near the banks of the river. We are social little animals and never live alone. We go in parties and build a beaver town in some pond or running stream."

"Tell me how you make your town, will you, Beaver?"

"I am going to show you our home. Ah, here we are now.

"You see the first thing we do is to build a dam across the stream with logs of wood kept down by mud and stones. This dam stops the water and makes it rise around our houses and cover the openings at the bottom. The houses themselves we build of mud, stones, sticks, and branches twined in and out to keep them fast. The houses are several feet high and quite thick. There are two large rooms in them.



One is under water and is used for a store-room."

"What do you store in it, Beaver?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"You know we must have food to eat during the winter, so we gather logs and branches and put them away in our store-room. The bark from these, and a few water plants are our winter food supply. After we eat the bark from the logs we float them down against the dam to be used in repairing breaks.

"The other room in our house is above water. The floor is covered with soft moss. This is the living-room. In winter we stay at home. A sentinel is on duty at all times to warn us of approaching danger. He does so by striking his broad flat tail on the water.

"It is very rarely that any of us are caught. There is a trapper here now who is the cleverest man I ever saw. I very much fear that he will get some of us before the winter is over. Last night he broke the ice and shoved down into the water a beautiful piece of poplar tree,



with a trap fastened to it. Of course it froze there. My eldest son saw it this morning, and thinking it had floated from the storeroom went down in the water to recover it. Finding he could not budge it, he climbed up to gnaw it off at the ice. 'Bing!' went the trap. Son was caught by the toe. Rather than remain there to be carried away by the trapper, he gnawed his toe off, and came quickly home to be cared for.

"Now let us go see whether those boys have done what I told them." He found the work completed.

"You are a good pair of workers, boys," he proudly said.

"There, Jack-a-boy, you can build a half dozen fires with the wood they have piled for you. Good-night! Come along, boys, it is time to go to sleep."



## CHAPTER XVII

### BLUE WOLF HAS MUCH TO SAY

JACK-A-BOY built the fire and sat down in its cheerful glow.

All at once he saw coming toward him what looked like a pack of wild fierce dogs.

They had the same pointed heads, the same wide mouths, the same long, sharp pointed teeth.

"I think they are wolves," said Rags. "They are very like a dog in looks, but while he is tame and gentle, they are savage and wild."

They certainly looked savage. Jack-a-boy quaked in spite of the magic wand. But trusting in its power, he kept his seat by the fire he had built.

The wolves came on. They saw the fire, which no wolf will approach, and the little



group seated by it. They saw, too, the Fairy Love All's magic wand, and yielded to its influence.

"A storm is raging, Jack-a-boy. This always means a truce among the beasts of the forest. We would rest a while. May we stay with you?"

"Indeed we will be very glad to have you," replied the child. The wolves seated themselves in a half circle far enough away from the fire for comfort.

Jack-a-boy gathered courage as he gazed on the silent forms in the snow. One wolf, larger than the others, seemed to have a kindly face.

Addressing him, Jack-a-boy said, "Blue Wolf, will you tell me who you are?"

"I am leader of this pack," replied the giant. "You see I differ in color from the others, though I belong to the same family. Once in a long while one of the gray wolves grows larger than his fellows, and wears a blue coat. This rarely happens, and the wolf so



distinguished is chosen by the others as their leader.

“Our home is in the wild northern forest. There I lead my followers in search of food. A wolf, they say, is always hungry. Perhaps it is true. At any rate, this I know is true. No matter how scarce the food, the pack always has enough. That is because we work together. Each for all, and all for each.”

“My story-books tell some awful tales of the wolves. Are they true, Blue Wolf?”

“Suppose you tell me a story-book story, Jack-a-boy, and I will tell you how much of it is true.”

So Jack-a-boy began, “It was many, many years ago that a famine swept through the land. Man nor beast could get but little to eat. The pack was lean and gaunt and hungry. ‘Is there no way?’ whispered one to another.

“Yes, one.

“Bells, softly tinkling across the snow, answer, ‘Yes, one way.’ Nearer, yet nearer, to the starving pack the sound is coming!



“A light flashes around the turning! Hoofs clank over the frozen ground! Horses and sleigh dash in sight! The wolves spring upon them!

“The horses, maddened with terror at the sight of the starving pack seem to fly across the snow.

“The wolves follow in their track, their eyes flashing fire!

“Suddenly, the sharp cry of a baby voice rings through the silence.

“‘See, brother, the big dog is trying to take me from you! Oh, don’t let him do it!’

“The baby’s scream of terror wakens the boy to action. A flash of fire! A loud report! A wolf falls dead! The pack halts long enough to devour the fallen comrade. Then on! on!

“The momentary pause saves the precious lives of the golden-haired baby and her brave brother.

“The towers of the city loom in sight!




New courage is infused into the horses! One last desperate effort, and they are safe!

"The pack steals away with unsatisfied longings, unappeased appetites, to lie in wait for some more unfortunate victim.

"But ah! Blue Wolf, suppose the boy had faltered; suppose the horses had made a fatal misstep! Think of the golden-haired baby, the dark-eyed laddie, the anguish of dear ones at home."

A few minutes' silence, and then Blue Wolf says, "Yes, that story is probably all true. We hunt differently when on the trail of a single animal, and it is rarely that one escapes us. One or two of the pack follow on the footsteps of our prey. The remainder of the band take their positions to the right and left of the leaders. If the animal pursued turns aside, it cannot escape us.

"No matter how fleet the animal, it must surely be overtaken by the long, slouching, tireless gallop of the wolves. However great its strength may be, it must fail at length





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under the constant attack of their sharp teeth.

“But why should we be less cruel? Man’s whole life seems to be one great struggle to end ours.

“Walk through the woods with me and what shall we see? Traps, poisons, dogs, hunters, trying to take away from us our freedom and our lives.

“Perhaps they would succeed more often, were they more careful in their preparations. For a wolf’s scent is wonderfully keen, and he will approach nothing a human being has touched. So, nearly always man’s traps and poisons are detected by the pack. The traps are deliberately sprung. The poisons are most carefully avoided.

“Yes, we are cruel,—cruel to man,—cruel to every other beast in the forest,—cruel at times to our own. But remember, Jack-a-boy, each must live after his nature. The same One who gave to you a tender and loving heart, gave to us a savage nature, and an



innate desire to 'Kill and eat! Kill and eat!'

"But oh, I wish the story-books would tell something more than what seems to be only cruelty. Have you never heard another side to the story? Something like this?"

### AN ADVENTURE

High up on the lonely mountains,  
The Indians watched and waited;  
There were wolves in the forest and bears in the bush,  
And I on my path belated.

The rain and the night together came down,  
And the wind came after,  
Bending the props of the pine tree roof,  
And snapping many a rafter.

I crept along in the darkness,  
Stunned and bruised and blinded,—  
Crept to a fir with thick-set boughs,  
And a sheltering rock behind it.

There from the blowing and the raining,  
Crouching, I sought to hide me:  
Something rustled, two green eyes shone,  
And a wolf lay down beside me.

There we two, in the storm and wind,—  
I and the wolf together,—  
Side by side, through the long, long night,  
Hid from the awful weather.



His wet fur pressed against me;  
Each of us warmed the other:  
Each of us felt, in the stormy dark,  
That man and beast were brother.

And when the fallen forest  
No longer crashed in warning,  
Each of us went from our hiding-place  
Forth in the wild, wet morning.

—*Bayard Taylor.*

“You probably think Mr. Putnam’s adventure with the wolf shows his bravery. Perhaps we wolves think it shows the wolf’s bravery, too. You know the story, do you not? No? Then listen while I tell you.

“A mother wolf and her two little ones, wild with hunger, one night killed seventy of his sheep. Of course, man would not tolerate this. The next day a number of them pursued Mother Wolf and the cubs who fled to the forest. One man or even three the old wolf could have managed to defeat. But more than that number must at length defeat her. Hiding her babies securely, as she thought, she fled, hoping the hunters would be misled by the trail and the lives of her



children saved. Alas! Man is a wise animal. The cubs were soon found and killed. But for caring for their safety, the mother could have escaped. Now she was doomed. The bay of the dogs and the trampling of the hunters' feet tell her how close they are upon her. A cave offers shelter. But the dogs betray her hiding-place.

"The hunters tried to smoke her out by burning straw and brimstone outside the mouth of the cave. But she quietly endured this.

"Mr. Putnam, becoming impatient, at last entered the cave himself. He had first tied a rope around his legs by which his friends were to pull him out of the cave, should the wolf attempt to attack him.

"He was forced to crawl in upon his hands and knees. After going some thirty feet, he saw the eyes of the wolf glaring upon him in the darkness. She uttered a roar of defiance. Without waiting for the signal, the men outside drew Mr. Putnam back so hastily that the



clothing was torn from his body and the skin badly scraped.

“Nothing daunted, however, he took his gun and torch and once more entered the cave. Crawling near to the old wolf, and waiting till she was about to spring, he shot her between the eyes.

“He was again pulled out of the cave, deafened by the noise and choked and blinded by the smoke.

“The third time he entered the cave he found the wolf cold and stiff.

“Taking firm hold of her ears he and the wolf were drawn out together.

“For many years the sheep-killer’s coat was shown as a trophy of Mr. Putnam’s skill and bravery. It may be yet for all I know.

“Let me tell you a secret, Jack-a-boy. All wolves are not friendly, and it may be of use to you some time. If you meet a wolf face to face, look him in the eye, and speak sharply and decidedly to him, and you will find that he will turn his back on you and steal off



in the opposite direction. For some reason, every wolf fears the human voice."

By this time Jack-a-boy's blue eyes were heavy with sleep. The lids fell, and Jack-a-boy heard nothing more. The wolves silently slipped away into the darkness and the storm, but Jack-a-boy slept on.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### A DEER YARD AND WHAT JACK-A-BOY SAW THERE

“UGH! Have they gone?” a voice near by suddenly inquired. Jack-a-boy, only half awake, sleepily rubbed his eyes and murmured, “Who? What do you mean? Oh, the wolves. Why, they are not here. But who is talking to me?”

Wide-awake by this time, Jack-a-boy jumped up and looked about him.

Two big eared grayish looking animals, their heads pushed through the bushes, peered anxiously around.

Jack-a-boy stood spellbound by the soft gaze that he felt rather than saw.

At last a soft prolonged “O-h-h-h” burst from his lips, and then he said, “You are deer, aren’t you? I have been longing to meet you.”



"Yes, this is a part of our yard. We passed a very uncomfortable night, I can assure you, with the fiercest pack in the forest so near. Are you quite sure they have gone?"

"Quite sure, and even if they were here I know that they could not harm you. I have Fairy Love All's magic wand.

"You spoke about your yard, Deer. What did you mean?"

"I will tell you," replied the deer. "We are the red deer of whom you have no doubt heard. In winter, before the first snow-storm, we gather into herds in different parts of the forest. As soon as the snow falls, we begin to make paths through it, long twisted, crooked paths, running in every direction. They cross and recross in a tangle utterly bewildering to any head save that of a deer or a moose. These paths we tramp down and keep open all winter, that we may feed upon the twigs and bark growing on the sides. Were it not for this care a single severe winter would leave scarcely a deer or a moose alive in the wood.



Our hoofs are sharp, you see, and sink into the snow, which often lies six or seven feet deep, making it impossible for us to go even a short distance without becoming utterly exhausted. It is this great tangle of paths which makes a deer or a moose yard.

"I hope you may meet a moose. He is the largest of the deer tribe. You will know him by his great size, awkward shape and broad horns.

"Oh, no, not the horns! I forgot. He hasn't any just now."

"I have been wondering," said Jack-a-boy, "how you can be deer with no horns. All the deer I have ever seen in pictures have had large, branching, beautiful antlers."

"That is because you have seen them only in pictures. Female deer do not have horns at any time. Nor do the males in winter. I'll tell you how it is.

"Long, long ago a deer and an antelope met at the edge of the wood. Now both are swift runners, and each of course, thinks him-



self the fleeter. The antelope lives on the plain, the deer in the forest.

“‘Good-morning, Cousin Antelope,’ said the deer. ‘What a fine morning for a race!’

“‘It is indeed,’ returned the antelope.

“‘Suppose we run,’ said the deer. ‘The lake in the wood shall be the goal.’

“‘Agreed!’ said the antelope, ‘and I’ll wager my dew claws that I will outrun you.’

“‘One, two, three, off!’

“Away they bounded, but the antelope, unused to the wood, was soon left far behind.

“Since that time the antelope has worn no dew claws.

“Not discouraged, however, the antelope longed again to match his skill against the deer’s.

“‘Let us race over the plain to the hill on the opposite side,’ he proposed on next meeting the deer.

“‘Elated with success, the deer replied, ‘Gladly, and I’ll wager my antlers that I will outdistance you.’



“On the plain the deer was no match for the antelope. Away sped the antelope like the wind. Reaching the goal, he waited until his discomfited rival arrived.

“‘You have lost your horns,’ said he.

“Since that time the deer loses his horns every year and must grow new ones.

“A full-grown deer sheds his horns in February, and they are not their full size again until the end of August.

“In the early spring the deer may be found in some secluded spot in the forest. He is then as harmless as his mate and almost as timid. A pair of little knobs appear on his forehead. They are covered with a soft velvety skin. In a few days these grow quite large and show that they are going to be antlers. By summer, you would never imagine that the deer had ever lost his horns. They are larger each year, and if you know how, you can reckon a deer’s age from the number of tines on his horns. When the horns are fully grown, the velvety skin is all rubbed off.



The horns are then a rich fawn color and highly polished.

“The male deer now delight in fighting with each other. Frequently, during the conflict, the horns of the two deer will interlock, and neither being unable to escape, both die a miserable death.”



## CHAPTER XIX

### TOO TIMID TO MAKE FRIENDS

TOWARD evening a strange sound like a dog whining or a baby crying broke the stillness of the air. As it became louder Jack-a-boy distinguished the words, "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!" and called out, "Dear, what is that? Do you know?"

"That is my cousin, the owl," said Prince.

"Why, Prince, are you crazy? Birds and cats can't be cousins."

"Well, maybe not. But his eyes are like mine at night anyhow. He can see quite as well in the dark as you can in the light."

"Let us sit down under yonder tree," said Rags. "That is where their hole is I am sure. Perhaps they will come out where we can see them."

"While we wait," said Prince, "I will tell



you about a family of screech owls that I once knew.

“It was one balmy night in April that I made their acquaintance. Screech Owl and his mate sat on the limb of an old tree. He sang to her his sweetest love-song. You very probably would not have thought his song very pleasing, for his voice sounded as mournful as though he had lost his best friend. But Screech Owl was exceedingly happy, for as he told his mate, he had just found a fine large hole up in the elm tree. It did not make him any the less happy when she said in a frightened voice, ‘Oh, I fear that hole is not safe. It is right over the road.’

“‘Now, my dear,’ said the owl, ‘we fly by night, because we can see by night. Man walks forth during the day, for he can see only by day. So you see there can be no danger.’ Allaying her fears with this wise argument, which he thought perfectly true, he coaxed her to fly over and inspect the new home. I did not hear them go, for owls have



such soft downy feathers that they fly without making the slightest sound. So, if my eyes had not been very sharp, I would have lost them.

“They reached the new home. It had been made by a woodpecker but the wood had rotted away, and now it was quite large enough for the owls, and they decided to make it their home.

“Soon there were four round white eggs in the nest, and after that, four downy little balls with big mouths and no tails to speak of.

“Every night the man, my friend, and I went out to watch them.

“At last one night, he said to me, ‘Look at that strange little creature scrambling up the bark of the tree. It looks like a ball of yellow down with no tail and a great round head.’

“We soon saw three more yellow balls climbing from bough to bough, all the time making a strange noise, like machinery that needed oiling.

“The mother and father flew back and



forth. Whenever they came to one of the young birds, there was a great snapping of bills and chattering. 'I guess their mother is stuffing their mouths with food,' said my friend. 'That is the way young owls are fed. The mother fills their mouths with food, and all they have to do is to swallow it.'

"The bird's bill is soft at first, and he cannot take hold of anything for himself.

"It won't be long, though, till he goes mouse hunting for his nightly feast. Failing mice, he will hunt and devour cut worms.

"Well, I believe those owls have heard us talking, and will not come out. Let us go to sleep. Perhaps we will have better luck another night."



## CHAPTER XX

### THE GRANDEST ANIMAL OF ALL

SUDDENLY, Jack-a-boy started up.

“What is that I hear?” he asked.

A strange clanking noise rang across the snow. Jack-a-boy and his companions hurriedly arose and started toward the sound.

Once in the open country, what a sight met their gaze! Over the snowy desert a herd of caribou bounded on like an express train!

At first, all he could see was a great cloud of steam, a whirl of flying snow, and here and there a glimpse of wide antlers or the gleam of a black muzzle. What a team! Santa Claus' own could not excel this. On they came! Swiftly! Magnificently! Straight on! turning only as the path beneath their feet swung round.

One great buck turned away from his fel-





“DO NOT FEAR ME, LITTLE BROTHER”







lows, and pausing at the child's side whispered, "Ah, little brother, I have found you."

"And I you," replied the child, "you great, grand Caribou."

"Do not fear me, little brother, the great and strong are the tender and loving. Fairy Love All has entrusted you to my care for a little while; of course, I know you cannot travel so fast as I, so you must let me carry you.

"Jump up in the hollow between my horns. You will find it a very comfortable cradle. Oh, yes, take Rags and Prince, too. You did not think I would part them from you, did you?

"Now we are off!"

"Do you live in the Northland always, Caribou?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"Yes, nearly. Long ago, we used to migrate like the birds, but now we wander only short distances. We can never settle down in the frozen season as the deer and moose do. You have heard of their winter yards. We



make no such provision, but depend on Mother Nature to take care of us.

“In summer, our coats are brown, like the great tree trunks among which we spend our lives. The frog of each foot grows large and spongy so that we can cling to the mountain-side or move silently about in the brush or leaves.

“In winter, we become gray and that is why we feel perfectly safe in the snow-storm. See my foot, now. The frog arches up out of the way. The hoof grows sharp so we can run over the ice without slipping. With the shell-like edge we can cut down through the ice and snow for the moss upon which we feed. Notice how large and deeply cleft my hoofs are, and how far apart they spread when I stand. The dew claws, too, are large, and the ankle joints so flexible that they let them right down in the snow. Our feet are really a sort of natural snow-shoe, and unless the snow is very soft, no trapper in his best pair is a match for the caribou.”



"Do you travel in bands during the whole year?" asked Jack-a-boy.

"Oh, no, only in the winter. In the summer we live singly or rather in pairs. Each pair have their home deep in the wood, and spend their time protecting and feeding the little fawn baby that they have to love and care for."

"I should think it would be very hard to make all the little new caribou get acquainted when you come together in the fall."

"Oh, we send them to school."

"To school?" echoed Jack-a-boy. "I never heard tell of a caribou school. Where is it?"

"I will tell you all about ours. In the autumn the caribou collect in herds. Then each cannot do as he pleases any more, but must learn to obey the laws made for the government of the herd. This would be very hard for the timid deer babies, who have followed their own sweet wills all their little lives. So they are sent to school to learn how



to live with others, to learn how to give up their rights and pleasures for the good of all.

“An opening in the wood is the school-room, a few fallen logs the furniture. To this place the Mother Caribou take the children on opening day, and lessons begin. The babies are left alone in a group to get acquainted.

“They are very like other children. Some are too shy to do aught but hang their heads and hide their faces. Some are so timid that only at mother's side do they feel safe, and this is where they run. Some are friendly at once and begin to enjoy the companionship of their neighbors. Some, we find them everywhere, are quarrelsome and they begin to fight.

“The teacher mothers are very patient. The timid babies are coaxed again and again from their hiding-places. The naughty quarrelsome ones are gently chided, wiser and older heads assuring them that quarreling is not a good way to begin school or life.



“As soon as the children become friendly with each other, lessons begin.

“First there is much drill in answering the signals, ‘Herd!’ ‘Scatter!’ ‘Run for your lives!’ ‘Circle!’ ‘Back in your tracks!’ all of which the babies speedily learn.

“Perhaps the most difficult lesson to teach them is ‘jumping.’

“Caribou are naturally poor jumpers, and the children, if left to themselves, would travel around an object, or crawl under it.

“In their journeys through the wood it often becomes necessary to jump and the children must learn this feat.

“Mothers and babies join in a race around the room, slowly at first, then faster. Soon the babies are left stringing out at the end of the line. Round and round they circle! Suddenly, the leader changes her course, and reaching a log, vaults lightly over it, followed by one mother after the other. What will the first baby do? Every mother watches anxiously. Reaching the log, he refuses to



budge. The next little one does likewise, except that he most likely knocks his head into the first one's legs.

"The rest, demoralized, run around the log, joyfully saying 'Ba-a-a!' when they reach their mother's side.

"The patient mothers begin all over again, and some of the little folks, entering into the spirit of the frolic, follow mother over the log, timidly enough at first, but gaining confidence with each trial.

"Some remain, either too timid or too obstinate to make the attempt.

"These are put into a separate class. They are led to a fallen log, and deliberately butted until they jump over it.

"In learning to jump, the children learn another important lesson. That is 'To follow the leader.' This is good, for the leader of the herd is always a wise old bull caribou who knows from long experience what is best for his subjects.

"We have a burying-ground, too. All the



caribou go there, when sick or wounded unto death, if their strength is sufficient for them to reach the spot.

"You may come across this ground at some time. There you will find the remains of generations of caribou, piles of bones covered with the dust of ages. The Indian finds the place, and here he looks for the caribou antlers he always has for sale.

"It is well! How few of us are of use after death. And it is a comfort to know that even then we can bring comfort and pleasure to those who are here.

"Why, here is the herd. What can be the matter?"

Caribou trembled from head to foot as he marked the signs of excitement in the herd.

"Worst thing imaginable, old friend," cried the leader. "The hunters! We must be quick or we are doomed! Do you and the youngsters take the upper road. Big Horn and the does take the lower. I and the remainder will scatter and make the many trails,



for many trails make few catches, and are so bewildering that neither man nor his dogs can follow."

Sure of his strength, Caribou bounded off with the youngsters. On they rushed, over hill and dale. Round and round they circled, never very far away, but making a trail so misleading that they need not fear. Exhausted at last, they lay down to rest. Caribou's mate and their child cuddled close to his side.

Suddenly, Caribou pricked up his ears. A man's voice broke the stillness of the night air.

"Jem, we are lost! A pretty prospect for us! The ground covered with snow, and no blankets. Let us build a fire or we will surely perish in the night. Fortunately, I have matches in my pocket and food in the bag. This thicket seems to be protected. Suppose we stay here till daylight." The voices hushed.

"Perhaps it is just as safe to remain here as to try to escape in our exhausted condition,"



said Caribou. "They can do us no harm till daylight, and it is probably best to 'lie low and say nothing' till morning."

Just as the dawn broke, Caribou gave the signal to move on.

But it was no ordinary hunter with whom he had to deal. Quick as he was, the hunter and his man were quicker, and ere the caribou had traversed many miles, the hunters were on their track.

In despair, Caribou signaled his mate and their child to part from him.

With the swiftness of a bird, she dashed away, and in a moment was lost in the forest.

Caribou took up her tracks and followed them for some distance, then leaping aside, he rushed on in the opposite direction, clearing the moose bushes with bound after bound, flying over the fallen logs, pausing neither for brook nor ravine.

Meanwhile how fared it with the mother and her child?



The sound of a gun across the snow tells the story all too well.

The child unable to keep up with her mother, —the hunters far too wise to be misled by Caribou's trick of taking up the doe's trail,—the mother too faithful to desert her little one.

Leaving his charges in safety Caribou darted off toward the sound. Ah, here is blood in the snow. On another half mile! There he finds her. She is walking slowly, her head hanging low. The baby is running here and there as though in trouble it cannot understand, yet returning every now and then to caress the dying mother.

He will not desert her now. Another half mile and the hunters are upon them. She is down now. Nothing can be done to save her.

Caribou circles round and round then flees from a foe he cannot resist. He has a duty to the band, and must stifle his own feelings as he performs it.

Jack-a-boy has jumped from his resting-place



in Caribou's horns, and hidden in the thicket. The poor mother turns her lustrous eyes on him. They are brimming with tears.

The man draws his knife! Jack-a-boy covers his face with his hands, and then it is all over. Caribou's mate lies dead in the snow. The baby, not understanding her silence, creeps to her side and nestles her warm little body to her cold and fast stiffening one.

"Jem, did you ever hear of such rare good luck?" and Jem's companion raises his gun to end the baby life.

Jack-a-boy bounded from the thicket. He flew at the hunter like a wild-cat, fists, feet, teeth and all of him. Rags and Prince stared in amazement! They had never before seen their darling in such a rage.

The next instant the child burst into passionate tears.

"How could you? How could you?" he cried, "the dear pretty thing."

"But, I didn't, child, see the baby wants to tell you so itself."



True, the bullet had sped wide of its mark, and a cold little nose thrust into his neck told him so.

Jack-a-boy smiled gratefully through his tears.

"Please, Mr. Hunter, forgive me," he said. "I did not mean to be so rude. But see how the young deer trusts me. Will you not permit me to keep it? I will care for it so tenderly!"

No need for the hunter to answer. Jack-a-boy and the deer made such a pretty picture, that it would have taken a heart harder than our hunter's to refuse his request.

Silently the two men turned and disappeared, and Jack-a-boy was left alone with his charge.

He stood pondering what to do.

Suddenly he wailed, "Rags! Rags! I want to go home!"

At that moment, Fairy Love All, in her silver-hued chariot, dashed around the turning.

A voice cried through the forest, "Fairy



## The Grandest Animal of All 137

Love All journeys through our woodland home  
with the child Jack-a-boy! He leaves you!  
Come bring him gifts and a last farewell!"

Then from every direction came the friends  
Jack-a-boy had known and loved,—all save  
the Mother Caribou. But was her baby not at  
his side, glancing into his eyes with a look of  
trust and love? And the little arms so ready  
to help and defend were thrown around it  
now as then.

A motley group gathered on the borders of  
the forest. From far and near they came!  
Red Squirrel and Jay with nuts so fine! Bun  
and the Woodpecker with leaves of tender  
green! Fox and Duck with fish and mouse!

Beaver and Wolf and Owl! Deer and  
Caribou!

Buffalo, Bob White and Little Grouse!—

Each brought of his best to the child, Jack-  
a-boy.

Bird and Beast looked into the sweet blue  
eyes with tender loving farewell glance.

Then as though from one voice came from



all, "Farewell, oh, Jack-a-boy! Dearly we have loved you! Farewell, oh, little brother! You go back to your world, we to our woodland haunts! Tell your people what love hath wrought. Farewell, oh, little brother! Farewell!"

And so Jack-a-boy passed from their lives back to the loving mother heart awaiting him at home.

The sunlight streamed through the windows upon the closed eyes of little Jack-a-boy.

A voice, seemingly far away, cried, "Why my Mannie, how late you are sleeping!"

The blue eyes opened to see mother's brown ones glancing lovingly down into them.

"Mother! Mother! such a delightful journey as I have had!" Then he told her of Beast-Land, of the friends he had made, of all that he had learned.

And did Mother say, "Why, Jack-a-Boy, you've been dreaming!" No, indeed she did not. But instead she made answer, "Mother is glad that her boy had such a delightful



time. Some day he must make a story for the boys and girls who cannot visit Beast-Land because they are well and strong."

Many years have passed since then, children, Jack-a-boy is a "grown-up" himself now. But his heart is as young and loving as in the long ago when with Rags and Prince he made his journey through the forest.

The little friends are gone now, but they still live in the memory of their old playmate, and the stories he sends out from his shut-in room to the girls and boys in the world beyond speak most often of the days they three spent so happily in Beast-Land. What ever you may think as you read his stories, you will say with me, "Jack-a-boy believes that he once was in Beast-Land."























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